

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

ENGLISH NATION.

Saturday, May 18. 1706.

IN my last, I took upon me, to examine Peoples Conjectures about the Issue of the Siege of *Barcelona*, before they know the Particulars; Time since seems to discover in their Favour, and that our Conjecturers were true chance Prophets: But my Observation is deriv'd from the little Ground, they have for such Calculations; wherein their Guesses are so wide, that they appear to be never the more Prophets, when it happens right, than when it happens wrong.

I cannot pass this Thought over, without applying one Paper to the like Observation, on the Affairs of *Flanders*, and the Campaign under the Duke of *Mariborough*.

We have been mighty fond here of loading his Grace upon new, and some very

extravagant Expeditions; some were for his acting on the *Moselle*, some had sent him to the *Upper-Rhine*, some had peirc'd into *Burgundy* and *Champagne* for him; and fancied, he could make Wings for his Army, fly over the *Alps*, and come down upon the back of the Duke de *Vendosme*, to relieve the Duke of *Savoy*, and the like.

Others, and not a few, had cut out a terrible March for him quite into *Bavaria*, and from thence to *Italy*, and no body knows whether, to re-inforce Prince *Eugene*.

No Man in the World has a greater Opinion, than I, of the Conduct of the Duke of *Mariborough*, and that he is cut out for uncommon Designs; nor do I doubt, but had his Grace a full Liberty of acting something extraordinary and suitable to his Character

ster in the World, would be undertaken.

But to exalt his Power to Impossibilities, and make him more than a Man; to calculate what has thousands of the most impracticable things in Nature in its Prospect, and cut out the Work of Ages for the short Extent of a 5 Months Campaign; this is making a Satyr upon the Duke of Marlborough's Discretion, lampooning his Judgment, and exposing our own Ignorance.

But what shall all our Dreamers of Dreams say, when at last we find the *English* Troops are march'd to *Tongerlen*, joyn'd the *Dutch* Army; and the Duke of *Marlborough*, Monsieur *Auverquerque*, the *Dutch* Deputies, and all the self same People, on the self same Stage of Action, the same Enemy, the same Generals, are entred the Field to see, if they can make any more of it than they did before.

This is the very Case, and all our great Prophecies are come to the old way of making War, and the State of the Case is plain; the Sum of the Matter is not in *Flanders*, nor on the *Rhine*, nor in *Italy*, but in *Spain*. That is the Nail that will go, and that must be driven; your Superiority to the *French* there, if preserv'd and good Use made of it, will make you full Amends for all their Superiority upon the *Rhine*, or any where else. *Spain* is a large Field, there are vast Conquests to be made, and a Foundation of Advantage infinitely superiour to all the *French* can do elsewhere; tho' they were to go on with more Success, than we have reason to fear they shall.

But after all, I will not deny, that to me 'tis plain from the Nature of things, and without any Assistance yet from Information, That his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough* has certainly met with some unexpected Difficulties and Disappointments, in the Measures and Designs he had laid for the publick Good; and this seems apparent from the following Observations.

1. From the long Stay made at the *Hague*, in Conferences, Debates, and concerning Measures with foreign Princes.
2. From the *English* Troops being so long

in their Quarters, and after that, marching to a separate Camp, and yet at last joining the *Dutch* Army.

3. From the sending Brigadier *Cadogan* Express into *Germany*, upon whose return, and perhaps not bringing so good News as was expected, the Conjunction of the Forces was immediately concluded; and the Generals went away to the Army.

4. From the long, long, long Delay of the March of the *Palatine* Forces to *Italy*, and at last lessening their Number.

5. From the ordering the *Prussian*, *Hessian* and *Lunenburg* Forces, to joyn Prince *Lewis* of *Baden*, who was certainly otherwise preparing to have joyn'd the *English* Forces, and have follow'd the Fortunes of the Duke of *Marlborough*.

What the Occasion of these Alterations of Circumstances has been, Time must discover; I do not pretend to know, nor shall I presume to offer, no nor my own Conjectures, tho' perhaps they may be very rational; 'tis enough to me, that something has certainly happen'd, that has quite inverted the Schemes of this Summer's War, and we must have Patience to wait the Event.

As to the Prospect of the Summer, I am not forward to come into the Number of those, I have been censuring; who teize the World with their forward Conjectures, and making Calculations of things upon *If* and *Supposes*, draw Inferences as wild as the Premises; but I must say a word or two to the Subject, or else I may disappoint the Reader in that part, in which there is most occasion for Remark.

The Prospect of the Campaign is now where promising, they say; but in *Spain*; and I am not careful to deny it.

In *Italy*, the *French* are forward in their Preparation to ruin the Duke of *Savoy*. The Duke de *Vendôme* is superiour to Prince *Eugene*, possesses him from all his Advantages, and seems to be in too fast a way to drive him quite out of *Italy*; and yet at the same time, is able to spare 3000 Men to besiege *Turin*, and entirely reduce that brave City, and most faithful Confederat, the Duke of *Savoy*;

save; for if that Capital be taken, 'tis hard to determine, what the Duke and his small Army will do to avoid falling at once; and this Superiority of the *French* there, is a most fatal Article, and makes a great Wound, in the Confederate Strength.

On the *Rhine*, the Forwardness of the *French*, rather than any real Superiority of Numbers, has given them a great Advantage over the *Germans*, beaten them out of *Alsace*, driven them from all their Posts, Lines and Entrenchments, taken from them all that Country, they had taken last year, and a vast Magazine into the bargain, and forc'd them to take Shelter in the Lines of *Stolhoffen*, on the other Side of the *Rhine*. 'Tis true, I do not yet lay any great Stress, upon the Gain they have made here yet, the Stores and Ammunition excepted, if the Troops of the Empire and Circles do but come up in any time; because Prince *Lewis* having sav'd the Gros of the Army from receiving any considerable Blow, they will

soon recover themselves, and in their turn may give the *French* a push as far as they have receiv'd.

But 'tis true, this depends on Time, and we yet know not how far the *French* may improve the Hurry and Fright the *Germans* are in, to strike some more considerable Stroke yet, which may not so soon be retriev'd; and in this I, may easily be understood to mean *Landau*: I confess, the *Germans* merit, to be abandoned to the Loss of that, and more than that, were not the Consequences fatal to the rest of their more *unlucky* Confederates; but I cannot but think, since the *Mareschal de Marfin* is march'd back with his Detachment to the *Moselle*, Monsieur *Villars* will not think himself strong enough to attempt a Place of that Strength. Since the *Germans* must then rouse, and perhaps might make him find it necessary to quit that Enterprize, to look after himself, or fight to some Disadvantage; but of this more shall be said in our next.

MISCELLANEA.

WE are all taken up mightily with Wars and Rumours of Wars, and making our Speculations and Remarks from abroad; but in the mean time, here is a strange and unusual Alarm at home, which hitherto I do not see any body takes Notice of; and the Contents of it are more particularly seen in the following Letter, sent some Weeks ago to the Author of this Paper, as follows.

Mr. REVIEW,

I Am never forward to give any heed to Dreams, Visions, Apparitions, and Almanack-makers, who, I believe, like the *Scythians* of *Agypt*, know nothing of the Master; but here are so many Stories spread about of strange Things, that are to come to pass in England this Year, that our Wives and Children are frighted out of their Wits, and we cannot keep them at home this Summer, for

Fear of being all destroy'd and swallow'd up in some dreadful Calamity, that is to befall the City; and this Hurry is grounded upon the following Story, which is very industriously spread about, and reported for a certain Truth, Viz. That a certain Minister of the Church of England, being upon his Death Bed, sent for the Bishop of G — r, and inform'd him, that some time ago Dr. Kidder, late Bishop of Bath and Wells, who was kill'd by the Fall of a Chimney in the great Storm, had appear'd to him, and told him, that this Summer towards the latter End of July, there should be a most dreadful Earthquake, in which great Part of the City of London should be destroy'd; but that he should not be uneasy at it, for before that time, he should be safe with him; — and that a few days after the Minister had told this Story to his Lordship, he dy'd.

To this Story, Sir, and to our farther Astonishment, we find Partridge's Almanack much